

INSTRUCTIONField Trips**A. Purpose**

To establish policy for planning and conducting field trips by students.

B. Types of Field Trips

1. Instructional field trips are planned visits away from the school taken by the students, under the direction or supervision of a teacher or other school board employee, to enrich and extend the classroom instructional plan. Such trips provide a link between the school and the community and assist the school staff in relating the ideas and concepts of the classroom to practical applications.

2. Extracurricular field trips are planned visits away from the school taken by the students under the direction or supervision of a teacher or other school official, in support of academic and athletic teams, performing groups, or other extracurricular activities.

3. Unusual field trips are instructional or extracurricular visits that involve unusual circumstances including but not limited to one or more of the following:

- a. Travel of more than 200 miles from Stafford County.
- b. Overnight trips.
- c. Student fund-raising.
- d. Student admission charges.
- e. Unusual circumstances or special issues involving safety or liability.

C. Requirements and Plans for Field Trips

1. Fundamental to the success of a field trip is the planning before and the follow-up after the experience. Careful planning and follow-up of each trip shall be carried out by teachers in cooperation with their principals. Instruction and activities which clearly relate to the objectives of the field trip are to precede and follow each field trip.

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2. Field trips shall be scheduled so as to minimize time away from school.

3. Field trips shall be available to all eligible students. The teacher and/or principal shall certify that no student will be excluded by reason of the parent/guardian of any child being unable to pay the cost of the trip from personal funds due to financial hardship as stated by the parent/guardian. The teacher and/or principal shall further certify, that no student will be excluded from any field trip due to the student either being unable to participate in fund-raising activities by reason of religious conviction, physical disability, or other compelling circumstance. Unusual field trip applications shall include the estimated cost for each student and adult participant. Scholarship funds shall be available to students who would otherwise be unable to participate.

4. Written permission of each student's parent or guardian must be received prior to a student being permitted to participate in a field trip; completed permission forms are to be filed in the principal's office.

D. Provisions and Requirements for Transportation

1. Teachers and principals will coordinate satisfactory arrangements for safe transportation and supervision. One teacher or other staff member shall accompany each class or group of students on a field trip with at least one adult chaperone on each bus. Additional adult chaperones should be provided on the basis of a minimum of one adult per ten elementary students, or one adult per 15 middle school or high school students. Exceptions may be made as to the number of chaperones, provided that they are approved in advance by the Director of Pupil Transportation and the Superintendent's designee. The number of chaperones required shall be determined by the ages of the students, the nature of the trip and the degree of supervision which is considered appropriate.

2. The Director of Pupil Transportation shall assign school buses and drivers for field trips in coordination with school principals. Local field trips shall be planned to allow the school buses to return to the base school in time for regularly scheduled runs.

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3. School transportation vehicles shall be furnished for all field trips if available and practical. Contracted transportation may be used with the approval of the Superintendent's designee.

E. Approval of Field Trips

1. Instructional field trips should be planned for a period of no longer than one day. Requests for one day instructional field trips must be approved by the Superintendent's designee. All field trip requests submitted must include the principal's approval (Exhibit A).

2. Extracurricular overnight field trips within the Commonwealth involving students who have been selected for regional or state competition sponsored by the Virginia High School League or Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association or which involve students participating in clubs, groups, organizations, or activities which are under the jurisdiction of the Virginia High School League or the Virginia Department of Education, or a recognized national, regional, or state education organization may be permitted with the approval of the school principal and the Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee. Other overnight extracurricular trips require approval by the school board (Exhibit B).

3. Unusual field trip requests shall be submitted for approval to the Superintendent's designee no less than 45 school days in advance of the date of anticipated departure on the form styled "Request for Approval of Unusual Field Trip" (Exhibit C). Requests shall be approved by the principal prior to submission to the Superintendent's designee and prior to consideration by the school board.

4. Any field trip that will include student fund raising shall be approved by the principal and the Superintendent's designee before any fund raising activities are begun.

5. Field trips that shall not be approved for sponsorship by Stafford County Public Schools include the following:

- a. Field trips that are primarily recreational such as trips to amusement and theme parks or to a student's home for a celebration.

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b. Field trips that require a travel day that is too long for the age levels of the students involved.

c. Field trips that require more than \$500 from personal funds or absence from school for more than five school days.

d. Field trips that are considered hazardous.

6. The school board disavows any responsibility or liability for trips that have been scheduled with travel agencies by school personnel for other school personnel or students.

F. Cancellation of Field Trips

Any and all field trips are subject to cancellation by the superintendent, or the superintendent's designee, including any trip in which the number of participants is not sufficient to justify the expense, or the commitment of resources necessary, and/or any trip as to which the circumstances indicate that the trip may be hazardous.

Editor's Note

See also division regulation #R6-42.

Legal Reference: Through June 30, 1999

Code of Va., §22.1-176. Transportation of pupils authorized; when fee may be charged; contributions; regulations of Board of Education.-- "A. School boards may provide for the transportation of pupils, but nothing herein contained shall be construed as requiring such transportation except as provided in §22.2-221.

B. When a school board provides transportation to pupils for extracurricular activities, other than those covered by an activity fund, which are sponsored by the pupils' school apart from the regular instructional program and which the pupils are not required to attend or participate in, the school board may accept contributions for such transportation or charge each pupil utilizing such transportation a reasonable fee not to exceed his pro rata share of the cost of providing such transportation. A

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school board may waive such fees for any pupil whose parent or guardian is financially unable to pay them.

C. When a school board provides transportation to pupils for field trips which are a part of the program of the pupils' school or are sponsored by such school, the school board may accept contributions for such transportation.

D. The Board of Education shall promulgate such regulations as shall be in the public interest to effect the intent of this section." (1980)

Virginia State Board of Education. Regulations Governing Pupil Accounting Records. " . . . §1.2 D Approval of school-sponsored field trips. All school-sponsored field trips shall be approved by the school board and recorded in the official minutes. The school board, by duly recorded action, may delegate this authority to the division superintendent, provided, that where such authority is delegated, the division superintendent shall make a written report to the school board on such field trips not less frequently than annually." (eff. July 1, 1988)

Adopted by School Board: May 12, 1992
 Amended by School Board: December 10, 1996
 Amended by School Board: March 24, 1998